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| EXAMINER |
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AKINTOLA, OLABODE

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| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
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3691

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07/16/2010

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 09/744,102 | Applicant(s) NHAISSI ET AL. | |
| | Examiner OLABODE AKINTOLA | Art Unit 3691 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 June 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 194-199 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 194-199 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on June 11, 2010 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 194-195 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roden (US 5970477) in view of Toader et al (US 5749075) in view of Ferguson et al (US 5819092) in view of Lappington et al (US 5764275).

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Re claim 194: Roden teaches a method of Internet billing, comprising: enabling a user computer to access a plurality of Internet sites each of which is a provider of a product or service for purchase by a user via said cost server at which the respective user has established *a user account* (fig. 1 RN {24, 18, 22}, col. 7, line 65 through col. 8, line 40, col. 9, lines 33-40); tracking access of the user to each said Internet product provider site and obtaining information as to a value amount said user requests to purchase at each said Internet product site (col. 11, lines 52-54, col. 9, lines 33-40, col. 13, lines 3-49); and generating a debit against an amount of the user account established at the cost server according to the value amount information obtained in said tracking, (col. 8, lines 60-63, col. 9, lines 23-49, col. 13, lines 3-49 “allocation parameters” and “distance-based rates”).

Roden does not explicitly teach the use of pre-paid user account in a given authorized amount; tracking the characteristics of the user's response to at least one activity the user performs on the website, wherein the generating of a debit includes modifying the debit by an award credit which is variable based on said tracking of the characteristics of the user's response to the at least one activity performed by the user on said Internet provider site.

Toader teaches the use of pre-paid user account in a given authorized amount (abstract, col. 3, lines 48-58). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Roden to include prepaid accounts for the obvious reason of limiting the access time and/or cost of products desired by the user to the balance available in the prepaid account.

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Fergusson teaches the concept of tracking characteristics of a user's response to certain actions such as filling out a marketing questionnaire or winning a contest (*equivalent to at least one activity the user performs on the website*), wherein generating a debit includes modifying the debit by an award credit which is variable based on the tracking of the user's response to said actions (see at least col. 4, lines 33-62, col. 9, lines 12-20, col. 10, lines 1-11, col. 12, lines 14-23, col. 29, lines 44-55, col. 30, lines 20-58, 60-67). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Roden to include these features as taught by Ferguson for the obvious reason of offering an incentive to the user for participating in the activities.

Roden, Toader and Fergusson do not explicitly teach that the awarded credit amount is a variable in direct relation to one or more specific characteristics of the user's response determined in said tracking.

Lappington, using the same problem solving technique, teaches a concept of awarding points that is a variable in direct relation to one or more specific characteristics of a user's response (i.e., response time to answer) (col. 9, lines 38-48). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Roden, Toader and Fergusson combination to include this feature for the obvious reason of providing variable credit amount to the user depending on the user's response characteristics.

Re claim 195: Roden, Toader and Ferguson are as discussed in claim 194. Toader/Ferguson further teaches the concept of crediting the account of the user responsive to the user activity (Ferguson: col. 30, lines 20-58, 60-67; Toader: col. 3, lines 48-58). It would have been obvious

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to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Roden to this feature for the obvious reason of offering an incentive to the user for participating in the activities.

Claims 196-199 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roden in view of Toader in view of Ferguson in view of Lappington as applied to claim 194, and further in view of EM Report (“New Service Rewards Users For Viewing Web Ads”, June 18, 1996) (hereinafter referred to as “EMR”).

Re claim 196: Roden, Toader and Ferguson are as discussed in claim 195.

Roden, Toader and Fergusson do not explicitly teach wherein the user activity comprises at least one of supplying personal user information, exposure to advertisement, responding to an advertisement, initiating an advertisement or viewing an advertisement.

EMR teaches the concept of rewarding a user with bonus points responsive to user viewing ads or filling out questionnaires (page 1, paragraphs 1-10). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Roden in view of Toader in view of Ferguson with this feature as taught by EMR for the obvious reason of offering an incentive to the user for participating in the activities.

Re claims 197-198: Roden, Toader, Ferguson and EMR are as discussed in claim 196.

Toader/EMR further teaches the wherein the bonus points are awarded based on a specific expenditure by the user, wherein the expenditure is at least of using a service, receiving a gift or responding to information (Toader: col. 3, lines 48-58; EMR: page 1, paragraphs 1-10).

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Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Roden with this feature as taught by Toader/EMR for the obvious reason of offering an incentive to the user for participating in the activities.

Re claim 199: Roden, Toader, Ferguson and EMR are as discussed in claim 197. Toader further teaches wherein the bonus points are used for at least one of an extra service, increased access functionality, increased quality of service or increased amount of service (col. 3, lines 48-58). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Roden with this feature as taught by Toader for the obvious reason of offering an incentive to the user for participating in the activities.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to OLABODE AKINTOLA whose telephone number is (571)272-3629. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30AM -5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alexander Kalinowski can be reached on 571-272-6771. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Olabode Akintola/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3691